

Amendments to the Claims

Please replace all prior versions of the claims in the application with the following claim listing:

1. (Currently amended) A heterodimeric fusion protein comprising a first and a second chimeric chain, said first chimeric chain comprising a portion of an Ig heavy chain linked by a peptide bond to a first p35 subunit of interleukin-12 (IL-12), said second chimeric chain comprising a portion of an Ig heavy chain linked by a peptide bond to second a p40 subunit of IL-12, said first and second chimeric chains being linked by a disulfide bond.
2. (Currently Amended) A fusion protein comprising a first chimeric Ig chain comprising a portion of an Ig heavy chain linked by a peptide bond to a first p35 subunit of IL-12, said first p35 subunit of IL-12 being linked to a second p40 subunit of IL-12.
3. (Currently amended) The fusion protein of claim 2 further comprising a second chimeric Ig chain comprising a portion of an Ig heavy chain linked by a peptide bond to a first p35 subunit of IL-12, said first p35 subunit of IL-12 being linked to a second p40 subunit of IL-12, said first and second chimeric chains being linked by a disulfide bond.

4-22. (Canceled)

23. (Currently amended) A method of increasing the circulating half-life of IL-12, comprising the steps of:
 - (a) linking a first p35 subunit of IL-12 by a peptide bond to a polypeptide, thereby forming a first chimeric chain, said first p35 subunit of IL-12 being linked to a second p40 subunit of IL-12 by a disulfide bond;
 - (b) linking a first p35 subunit of IL-12 by a peptide bond to a polypeptide, thereby forming a second chimeric chain, said first p35 subunit of IL-12 being linked to a second p40 subunit of IL-12 by a disulfide bond; and

(c) linking said first and said second chimeric chain by a disulfide bond, thereby forming a heterodimeric fusion protein,
said fusion protein having a longer circulating half-life than unlinked ~~first and second p35 and p40~~ subunits of IL-12.

24. (Original) The method of claim 23 wherein said first and second polypeptides are selected from the group consisting of a portion of an Ig heavy chain, a portion of an Ig light chain, an antigen, and serum albumin.

25. (New) A fusion protein comprising a first chimeric Ig chain comprising a portion of an Ig heavy chain linked by a peptide bond to a p40 subunit of IL-12, said p40 subunit of IL-12 being linked to a p35 subunit of IL-12.

26. (New) The fusion protein of claim 25 further comprising a second chimeric Ig chain comprising a portion of an Ig heavy chain linked by a peptide bond to a p40 subunit of IL-12, said p40 subunit of IL-12 being linked to a p35 subunit of IL-12, said first and second chimeric chains being linked by a disulfide bond.

27. (New) The fusion protein of claim 25 further comprising a second chimeric Ig chain comprising a portion of an Ig heavy chain linked by a peptide bond to a p35 subunit of IL-12, said p35 subunit of IL-12 being linked to a p40 subunit of IL-12, said first and second chimeric chains being linked by a disulfide bond.